

Orange and Union Streets Neighborhood Study
Henry Pinkham House
also known as Lawrence Ayers House
13 Orange Street
Nantucket
Nantucket County
Massachusetts

HABS No. MASS-1065

HABS
MASS
10-NANT
76T-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

ORANGE AND UNION STREETS NEIGHBORHOOD STUDY
HENRY PINKHAM HOUSE
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Location: 13 Orange Street (on west side), Nantucket,
Massachusetts

Present Owners: Edwin J. and Denise L. Mills

Present Occupants: Mills family

Present Use: Seasonal occupancy

Brief Statement
of Significance: A typical Nantucket four-bay house; part of the
Orange and Union Streets Neighborhood Study
(MASS-1014).

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners:

- 1800 -- Henry Pinkham bought land and built a home.
- 1808 -- Barnabas Swain, his father-in-law, bought the property from Henry Pinkham.
- 1811 -- Cromwell Barnard bought from Barnabas Swain.
- 1862 -- Thomas B. Barnard, 2nd, bought from Cromwell Barnard "his homestead" just before he died at age 93.
- 1869 -- James H. Gibbs from Caroline H. Barnard, widow of Thomas B. Barnard, for \$800.
- 1881 -- George C. Allen from James H. Gibbs.
- 1901 -- Maria C. Allen, widow of George C. Allen, bought their shares from her sons, Charles R. and Edgar L. Allen.
- 1908 -- Charles R. Allen inherited from Maria C. Allen.
- 1908 -- Josiah F. Murphy from Charles R. Allen, "now of Oakland, California".
- 1908 -- Etta C. Allen by deed of Josiah F. Murphy.
- 1911 -- Lawrence Ayers bought from Etta C. Allen.
- 1965 to date -- Edwin J. and Denise L. Mills from Estate of Lawrence Ayers.
(Abstract: Records at Registry of Deeds, Nantucket, Massachusetts)

2. Date of erection: c. 1800. Deed of 1808 reads, "being house I built and live in". Abstract: Book 21, Page 181, Registry Deeds, Nantucket).

3. Architect: Not known.
4. Original plans, construction, etc.: At the time this house was built there was a roadway on the north side. This was closed, probably when the Church was erected in 1809.

The house was built square with central chimney and high basement and high front stoop with steps running up to it on the side. House has clapboard front and shingled side. Two ells at the south side originally contained a winter kitchen and a summer kitchen.

5. Notes on alterations and additions: Ells and sheds have been changed from time to time. There is now an ell on the south side at rear. A walk was placed on the roof and there is now a balustrade across roof front.

Recently much renovation and restoration has been done by the new owners.

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

In 1800 the west side of Orange Street at this location was known as Wesco Hill.

Cromwell Barnard, a tailor, lived in his homestead here from 1811 until he died in 1862 at the age of ninety-three. When he bought the property the deed from Barnabas Swain read "at a place called Wesco next the new 2nd Congregational Meeting House". The Church had been built two years earlier.

Henry Pinkham who originally built the house, was a cooper. He seemed to have had financial difficulties for his father-in-law, Barnabas Swain, took over the property, selling it three years later.

From 1869 to 1881 the house was owned and occupied by James H. Gibbs. Mr. Gibbs and later his son and grandson became known for their faithful ringing of the bell in the tower of the Church next door. It was and still is the custom to ring fifty-two strokes at 7 A.M., noon, and 9 P.M., the latter being known as the curfew. The Gibbs family carried on the tradition until the clock was electrified in the 1950's.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old Views: Photograph in One Hundred Years on Nantucket, Inquirer & Mirror Supplement, 1921; photograph in Colonial Architecture of Cape Cod, Nantucket and Marthas Vineyard by Alfred Easton Poor, New York: William Helburn Inc., 1932; photograph in Historic Nantucket, July, 1970.

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Prepared by Mrs. Marie M. Coffin
Nantucket, Massachusetts
August, 1970

PART II. PROJECT INFORMATION

These records were prepared as part of the Orange and Union Streets Neighborhood Study (MASS-1014) made in the summer of 1970 by the Historic American Buildings Survey on Nantucket, Massachusetts. This is the fifth summer project of a continuing HABS comprehensive survey of the early architecture and urban design of Nantucket financed by a grant from the Nantucket Historical Trust.

The project was under the general supervision of James C. Massey, Chief of the Historic American Buildings Survey. Project Director was Professor F. Blair Reeves, A.I.A., of the University of Florida. Historical information was provided by Mrs. Marie M. Coffin of Nantucket, Massachusetts. Photographs are by Jack E. Boucher of Linwood, New Jersey. The material was edited for deposit in the Library of Congress by Mrs. Constance Werner Ramirez, August 1971.